

Lincoln County

Economic Development Strategies:

Long-Range Plan 2010-2011

Executive Summary



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Preface

It has been 15 years since the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners asked the Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County to develop *Lincoln County Economic Development Strategies: Long-Range Plan 1995-2015*. Since then it has been revised and re-issued bi-annually.

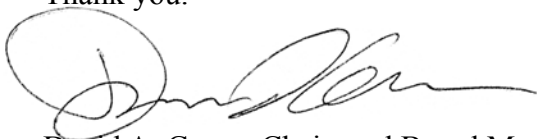
We continue to believe the goal of economic development should be an improved quality of life for Lincoln County's residents. Increasing the average income of our residents is of key importance, but quality education, accessible health care, affordable housing, and protection of our natural environment are also key components. We need to strengthen and build upon our tourism and natural resource employment bases toward a more diversified economy that offers higher-income year-round jobs in Lincoln County.

Economic development in Lincoln County is activity that supports, enhances, or diversifies our county's economy. The approach of the Economic Development Alliance has evolved to change with the changing world in which we live; a world where global prices, commodities, transport and telecommunications have reshaped our lives. This year's Long Range Plan tries to fit the local competitive advantages of Lincoln County Oregon into this global setting. Business Recruitment, Retention and Expansion are found in the Plan. A retention and expansion strategy uses the model of growing existing businesses through nurturing and support (sometimes called "economic gardening"), while recruitment brings new business opportunities to the community. A Team Approach using many entities, both private and public, is essential. A lead agency may be identified but they will always need assistance to go forward. Our approach places value on green and sustainable practices as that provides a solid base for jobs and the natural environment. One way this is represented in our Long Range Plan is an emphasis on Value-Added Products and Services, whether it be in forest products, agriculture, seafood, or niche tourism.

We intend to fully participate in the Knowledge and Innovation Economy, as reflected in our newest goals (9 and 10), Marine Research and Technology/Telecommunications.

A long-range plan for economic development in Lincoln County is not static. Planning is an ongoing process of revision and improvement as we make progress, move on, or respond to outside change. The challenge is to respond in ways that improve the standard of living and the quality of life in Lincoln County. We welcome your comments.

Thank you.



David A. Green, Chair, and Board Members:

Curt Abbott	Marty Cahill	Gary Gamer	Commissioner Terry Thompson
Cliff Collard	Amy Libby	Tom Rinearson	
Zack Dahl	Dr. Pat O'Connor	Dr. George Boehlert	
Bryan Fitzsimmons	Dr. Ed Parker	Councilor Sue Woodruff	

Caroline Bauman, Executive Director



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Vision and Process

In these pages we elaborate on the focus areas listed above. The first five – in no order – pertain to quality of life and encompass values and needs for people who live and work locally. The other five (in no order) are identified priority sectors to develop in size and importance. A wide variety of groups actively work on all ten. Economic Diversification and Quality of Life (which were listed in previous versions of the report) are fundamental parts of our organization's approach and are no longer on the list. We recognize that there is significant overlap; for example, Technology cannot be separated from Marine Research which in turn includes elements of Education. They are separated to provide an action framework for areas we will promote.

Not mentioned in the Goal areas, but still of great importance to our economic development, are clean abundant water, wastewater treatment, recycling, energy efficiency, public safety, and fire protection. Some of these fall more strongly into the purview of our elected leadership, and some are the responsibility of all of us. The business finance climate, public policy, taxes, and appropriate zoning are vital to developing the economy, but sometimes respond to larger forces. We work on them where feasible.

The focus areas have evolved over past 15 years and progress made revising led to . This version contains some revisions for clarity and brevity. Rather than an Action Plan for each goal, we are now identifying a Lead Agency and Partners. We do not wish to impose but to suggest actions to be taken. The Economic Development Alliance (EDA) plays the role of assisting with every area contained herein but is not solely responsible. EDA will take on a leadership role in Manufacturing, Marine Research, and Technology and we look forward to working with all of you in our many partnerships.

Thanks for your input in idea generation, writing, and editing.



GOAL 1. EDUCATION:

Support & expand local educational services for the community by building our educational infrastructure.

Strong advocacy for the county's education providers: Lincoln County School District, Oregon Coast Community College, and Oregon State University is needed. The Oregon Coast Aquarium is a center for coastal learning. Our local education partners are an important factor in attracting and retaining businesses on the central coast.

1.1 Promote the value of life-long learning in the quality of life in Lincoln County. Assist education providers in anticipating and meeting the community's educational and technical needs. Quality education plays an essential role in economic development and the recruitment of entrepreneurs and professionals to Lincoln County and the region's economic well being. Reading and literacy are of the highest importance.

1.2 Oregon Coast Community College: Support the programs that will be located in new campus sites. It is crucial to make full use of the new campuses. Nursing, aquarium science, general education courses and high school completion programs at Oregon Coast Community College need community and state support for student scholarships, program underwriting, and student recruitment as the college endeavors to meet local employers' needs for trained workers, and residents' desire for enrichment. Community members can be "ambassadors" between OCCC and the various high schools.

1.3 OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center (from www.hmsc.oregonstate.edu/info/strategicplan/):

Goal: Create and expand opportunities for outstanding and compelling educational programs and a superior learning environment in marine and coastal science and resource management.

- Develop opportunities for undergraduate courses at HMSC that enrich existing programs.
- Increase opportunities for graduate studies at HMSC.
- Develop leading national and international programs in informal education and extension-based outreach in coastal and marine science.
- Create programs of continuing professional education for scientists, managers, practitioners, and educators.

1.4 K-12 Education: meeting and exceeding state and national standards. We need to utilize best practices for educating the workforce of tomorrow by providing information technology, basic skills that are needed for employment, career-related experience, and entrepreneurship advising. We should foster interchange between teachers and community issues and needs. Innovation in the schools such as the IB and credit by proficiency should be expanded upon, along with strong community college connections.

1.5 Pre-Kindergarten. We recognize that programs such as Head Start and quality preschools contribute to early literacy and contribute to students' success from kindergarten through adult life.

1.6 Advocacy and Lead Agencies: Funding for education requires advocacy with policy makers, stressing that "education is good for business." More bridges are needed between business needs and education, for example: using business school curriculum and building communication skills. We must find ways to locally invest in education, and look at creating a "think tank" for additional, stable funding. We need to highlight the importance of our local education providers in attracting and retaining business. Education is connected to the region's economic and social well-being. The Board and Supervisor of the Lincoln County School District, and Board and President of the OR Coast Community College are the Lead Agencies identified for this set of strategies, with assistance from parent groups, government, and business groups.



GOAL 2. HEALTH CARE:

Lincoln County's health care system is one key to the county's economic growth.

Our overall goal is to improve the health of our people, which in turn supports community livability. All aspects of business recruitment, and resident/employee attraction are impacted by access to an affordable, high- quality health system. Areas of focus in 2010: workforce, facilities, access to care, wellness, and public health.

2.1 Retention of Workforce: A strong core of high quality local healthcare facilities and professionals create family-wage jobs and keep healthcare dollars in the county. The nursing degree program is one method to locally support this workforce and more need to be found, such as legislative assistance to rural communities and tax incentives.

2.2 Facilities: Both county hospitals are embarking on long term upgrades leading to replacement. Public information and understanding are vital to public support. Rural clinics are expanding through Samaritan Health Services (SHS). Two federally-qualified Health Centers and a Veterans Clinic have been added to the county.

2.3 Access: Encourage collaboration among providers to assure healthcare availability and coordination to all citizens. Tools such as videoconferencing and EMR/PHR (Electronic Medical Records/Personal Health Record) can benefit both providers and patients. School-based clinics and mental health services always need support, as they are tax-supported. The Health and Human Services (HHS) Dept. sets goals each year to address health problems in the community (e.g., teen pregnancy, substance abuse, indigent care). Employees of small businesses and self-insured individuals need affordable health insurance. National health care reform is expected to require assistance and response for quite some time.

2.4 Wellness and Preventive Care: More effort here saves time, money, and most importantly, improves general health. Samaritan Health Services has a Health Education facility in its plans, and schools can also make a difference. Facilities such as pools, rec. centers, and trails are important to provide throughout the county. Lincoln County Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) prioritizes new local health initiatives based on a countywide health needs assessment.

2.5 Public Health: Immunization, chronic care programs, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, obesity, and anti-smoking efforts are just a few of the issues that we must address in the public health arena. The CHIP and HHS assessments should be the guides to action. The Lead Agencies are the Health Districts, and the Boards and Executive staff of the two hospitals for Samaritan Health Services. Lincoln County is another major provider.

GOAL 3. HOUSING, CHILD CARE, FAMILY SUPPORT:

We need a wide range of housing options, recognizing that an economy without affordable housing for workers will stagnate. The need for affordable housing is still acute. Workers need a home to hold a job. Residents without incomes have difficulty keeping their housing; the two needs are inextricably linked. Child care and family support have similarly emerged as essential needs in this economic climate.

3.1 Support the development of affordable housing: The ten-year plan to end homelessness is actively in place. Many other options are now described in the Workforce Housing Tool Kit. These include the Lincoln Community Land Trust (and similar groups), incentives for developers, and homeowner subsidies through government programs. The Community Development Corp. and Housing Authority can help renters, and ordinances can be adapted to accommodate flexible uses like residence over commercial units.



3.2 Support Child Care availability: A coordinating non-profit has now been formed in the county with a mission and goals to provide child care services. This group is working with OSU Extension Service, and is reaching out to employers and developing funding to fill this urgent need.

3.3 Family Support: We recognize that we must attract and retain parents in the 25-45 age group in our coastal economy. Families can be supported by: summer and after-school programs, healthy lifestyle and low-cost recreation options, literacy and English proficiency programs, and by listening to their other needs and responding to them.

GOAL 4. TRANSPORTATION:

Improve Lincoln County's transportation systems.

4.1 Roads: Work cooperatively to improve transportation links both within Lincoln County and connecting Lincoln County to the Willamette Valley. Improving Highway 101 and inland routes, and avoiding congestion, are very important to the county's future economic development. Improvements are needed to support tourism, business and residential growth while protecting scenic values. We must continue to pursue options for improved, reliable, and safe transportation for Lincoln County's residents and visitors. This includes bridges, culverts, lighting, medians wherever needed.

4.2 Air: Commercial air service is expanding (3 flights per day as of this report). Marketing this travel option is essential for long term viability. The City of Newport's municipal airport is a regional server. The rest of the county should join the city and airline to promote it for success after the close of subsidy.

4.3 Other Modes: Explore alternative modes of transportation for Lincoln County's visitors and residents. "Non-auto" options need to be pursued wherever appropriate, including alternative fuel, public transit, car-pooling, bicycle, and pedestrian. Innovative development and public education campaigns about these alternatives will help to ensure success.

4.4 Water: Support Lincoln County's ports and harbor districts. The ports of our county are crucial resources for economic development. They facilitate the fishing industry, shipping, and recreation, among other activities. Water connections into Yaquina Bay and Toledo should be an ongoing action item.

GOAL 5. ARTS AND CULTURE*:

Develop the arts as an economic resource.

Lincoln County has a thriving arts and cultural scene that is remarkable for a rural county. Our goal is to establish this place as a major arts and cultural destination for tourists, creative professionals and retirees. The arts enhance the quality of life and we want to support local artists. By working with artists and arts organizations we reach the county's potential as an arts destination.

Strategy 1.1 Support visual artists, writers, musicians, and performing artists. In cooperation with the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, we can bring training and marketing resources to continually upgrade the professionalism and income in this sector. Relationships between the arts and the business community are mutually beneficial and should be strengthened.

Strategy 1.2 Improve access to cultural opportunities, increase participation, and encourage art in public spaces. Accessible art enhances community livability, and helps educate the public about art. Underwriting, flexible pricing, transportation options, and a variety of venues help provide access. The level of cultural



awareness for young people is raised through after-school, summer, free, or outdoor programs.

Strategy 1.3 Support cultural facilities, projects and tourism: Collaborations and partnerships for cultural tourism are essential and include pursuing grants, fundraising, events and volunteering. Our support for cultural facilities encourages and promotes historic preservation, libraries, cultural centers, galleries, and even culinary kitchens. All of these enhance our county's quality of life.

Strategy 1.4 Understand, Use, and Increase the Creative Vitality Index for Lincoln County: This index measures the economic health of the arts-related component of the economy. It uses employment, census and participation measures to give a picture of an area.

Partners: Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, Lincoln County Cultural Coalition, Lincoln County Historical Society, other museums, arts and cultural organizations.

***We use the word "arts" to also include culture for brevity.**

GOAL 6. BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION/MANUFACTURING

Small businesses, manufacturers, and industrial sites. As Lincoln County does not have large parcels of available, appropriately-zoned land to recruit large employers, most of our economic growth will come from the formation, expansion, and retention of existing small businesses and from selective recruitment or start-up of small businesses. We need to enhance support services to help local businesses with their needs. We should pursue the growth and establishment of industrial sites in Lincoln County to serve the needs of "traded sector" jobs, a key component of a healthy economy. While we do not foresee hundreds of acres being made available for industrial use, appropriate siting and establishment of industrial land is important to our ability to diversify the economy.

Strategy 10.1 Expand the county's capacity to support small business establishment, retention and expansion. Oregon Coast Community College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides the key support for small business start-ups, retention, and expansion. The SBDC and Economic Development Alliance both have online information sources for small businesses.

Strategy 10.2 Enhance entrepreneurship in Lincoln County. Lincoln County should build on the CORE (Connecting Oregon for Rural Entrepreneurship) grant program to further assist area entrepreneurs and future entrepreneurs. The cultivation of entrepreneurs from elementary school age onward gives young people the knowledge to start their own businesses as they mature. Business started locally create jobs, bring dollars into the local economy, and are invested in the community.

Strategy 10.3 Support buying local and sales of locally made products, an e-commerce strategy, and incubators for growing businesses.

Strategy 10.4 Continue to educate qualified business about Lincoln County's Enterprise Zone to ensure the zone is being utilized in the support of job creation in the manufacturing sector. The Lincoln County Enterprise Zone offers property tax breaks for new building construction, significant remodeling of industrial buildings, and significant investment equipment, if such investments result in new job creation.

Strategy 10.5 Work with the State of Oregon to develop "certified" industrial sites in Lincoln County.



Such sites are guaranteed to be able to be developed in six months for qualified projects. This is highly attractive to businesses looking to expand or relocate in response to market conditions, in a timely fashion. Further, such sites are promoted and marketed over those that are not certified by the State of Oregon.

Strategy 10.6 Support the infrastructure required to support manufacturing activities. From enhanced rail services to barging, manufacturing companies require a variety of avenues for shipping out product, and bringing in materials. Methodologies for investment, such as angel networks need to be reviewed, and those that are viable need to be pursued.

GOAL 7. NATURAL RESOURCES:

Expand and add value to our natural resource base.

The natural resource base of the coastal economy, including both land and marine, should be protected and expanded by additional processing and product development. Commercial fisheries have a traditional base in Yaquina Bay, and natural resource jobs are a critical part of the Lincoln County economy.

7.1 Fishing, sport and commercial, represents an important part of the economy of Lincoln County. The ports of the county also provide boat recreation, marine-related industries, and home porting of research vessels. Specialty markets are increasing for seafood, including direct-to-restaurant. Our fishing industry is roughly the same part of the local economy as the tourism industry. This very valuable component of the county's economy needs to be protected and assisted in evaluating what is needed to help the fishing industry when faced with restrictions and cutbacks.

7.2 Collaborative research and sharing of information between local scientists and the fishing industry, as well as between scientists and commercial seafood industry, has the potential to enhance both.

7.3 Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQ): This newly emerging fisheries management strategy will involve allocating catch, which is then open to buy/sell/and trade. There needs to be an organized, cooperative effort if we want to keep the landings in the central coast ports. The partners will include: ports, fishermen, processors, small/locally-based vessels, and support industries.

7.4 Ocean Zoning, or Spatial Planning: We must ensure wide collaboration on this front which is proceeding forward at the state and national level. There are many users now competing for space and associated permitting (see Marine Research Goal 10).

7.5 Agriculture and forest products: find ways to protect, diversify and add value to natural resource products harvested within Lincoln County, and to market those products. Adding value through manufacturing, packaging or marketing techniques will help create or retain jobs in Lincoln County. We need to find creative opportunities to add value to natural resource products in farming and timber. Community Forestry that connects selective harvesting with fine wood niche manufacturers is a promising development.

7.6 Support Farmer's Markets and "Buy Local" campaigns to keep local dollars circulating. These markets feature items such as produce, cheese and local woolen products. The next steps in "local food" are Community Gardens, Community-Supported Agriculture, and Farm-to-Table (or fisherman to restaurant) specialty crops of gourmet quality. The tourist of Lincoln County is becoming more discriminating and there is a demand for more fresh product and more variety in flavors.



7.7 Other Natural Resource Issues, to be investigated further: Engagement of federal agencies in forest products, involvement of the Siletz Tribe in partnerships with natural resource products, conservation tools as appropriate, zoning tools, and regional water supplies are all to be investigated further.

GOAL 8: TOURISM:

Expand and add value to our tourism industry.

1. Regional Strategies, Vision, and Cooperation

Work to develop a regional approach to tourism on a countywide basis by partnerships between various visitor industries and organizations. Share studies and data in presentations. Cooperate with other coastal counties to promote the coast as a region. Work within programs developed by the state.

2. Workforce Development

Increase knowledge of the county among front-line workers. Support programs to educate visitor industry workers about the various amenities Lincoln County has to offer. A few ideas:

- Use successful models such as “Know Your Newport” to reach and educate staff. Employers can help motivate and provide attendees.
- Create fun bus tours of the area so employees can see the area, and then be able to talk to tourists and tell them the many activities and places to see in the area.
- Travel Oregon” has a free Q program on line, to increase customer satisfaction.
- Work with employers and encourage employers to pay employees to attend informational events.
- Create tours of vessels. NOAA, the aquarium, and Hatfield for the ever-changing workforce.

3. Marketing/Promotion

- Optimize the unique strengths of Lincoln County. Example: the Yachats trails and botanical garden. Waldport Water Trail, working waterfront, arts, sport fishing, bridges, lighthouses.
- Raise awareness of COCA hiking guide for Lincoln County on line and in print. Includes community biking trails and organized activities.
- Data show people are drawn to the beach for the ocean, hiking, wildlife viewing.
- Use technology for walking tours, videos about the county. Use You-tube.
- Publications: problem of too much duplication has been raised and must be answered. The numerous visitor guides should be looked at, consolidated, and success of print ads be measured.
- Buy Local-style efforts can add to industry success. Mutual support might include discounts, coupons, contests to visit other parts of county. “Buy Local” organization offers discounts.
- Tourism businesses can network by memberships in other chambers in the county.

4. Develop New Venues for Tourism such as Cruise Ship welcoming. Innovations and opportunities in group travel have a great potential in increasing visitor numbers and should be sought out.

5. Optimize resources from outside the county to assist with Tourism goals. The lead and partner organizations should always search for programs and resources that might assist some of our smaller organizations and merchant groups.

Lead Agency: COCA (Central Oregon Coast Association) with partner organizations: Economic Development Alliance, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, Lincoln City’s Chamber and VCB, other chambers throughout county.



GOAL 9. MARINE RESEARCH (NEW):

We support the establishment and recruitment of specialized support businesses relating to the activities and research being performed at Hatfield Marine Science Center, NOAA Marine Operations Center-Pacific, and elsewhere. We are committed to a quality of life that is capable of attracting and retaining marine science workers. The Oregon Coast Community College, the Aquarium and the Ports are partners in this effort

9.1 The OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center is an operational base for: Ocean Observation Infrastructure, OSU research vessel(s) support, mapping and data collection, climate change modeling and many other activities. Our goal is to support and expand all projects of: National Marine Renewable Energy Center (NMREC) and its needs; Marine Mammal Institute and its needs; and Sea Grant for seafood industry R&D, commercial applications for seafood, and adding value. We support the expansion of Hatfield Marine Science Center as a center for education, research and commercially applied science.

9.2 We support a wide range of economic development strategies based on use of marine resources. This includes help and support to Lincoln County's fishing industry, oyster and mollusk applications, and other creative strategies that take advantage of the marine environment.

9.3 The Ports of Newport and Toledo are working on major capital projects that will contribute to a broad range of economic activity. We must be ready to step in when needed as a community to ensure the successful completion of projects. The new NOAA facility will raise the standard for water-dependent tenants and our waterfronts will display excellence in other facilities. A re-built international terminal and the Toledo shipyard provide upcoming facilities for use.

9.4 NOAA Marine Operations Center-Pacific: We are committed to helping NOAA fill its needs and solve any problems that arise. We will be actively training support businesses for NOAA in government procurement to qualify them for contracting. Follow-up to maintain lists of companies is vital.

9.5 Oregon Coast Aquarium is a major asset to the community and plays a role as a site for K-12 education on animals and ocean life. Newport is showing the world that a modern fishing industry, tourism, marine science and aquarium science can live compatibly and complement each other, by understanding each other's problems and working together.

9.6 Business Community: We will be working on expanding the number of businesses that can support the needs of science and the fishing fleet. A possible business/technology park to house related businesses may be considered. The improvements to the South Beach area in transportation and amenities will complement the ongoing improvements at and near the community college.

9.7 Schools: Our goal will be continual improvement to the level required by families of science professionals – from pre-K to 14 grade levels. An emphasis on marine sciences and ocean literacy is a benefit to our community; for example, becoming known for aquarium science at Oregon Coast Community College. The Aquarium adds to the marine-oriented knowledge of all its visitors.



GOAL 10. TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Develop the capacity to support and recruit information-intensive jobs. An economic transition is shaping the global economy. Corporate downsizing, increased use of telecommuting and independent consultants provide economic opportunities for coastal communities such as ours. Lincoln County should offer telecommunications services comparable to those available in urban centers so it can attract and retain high-wage telecommuting and independent small business jobs.

Strategy 10.1 INFRASTRUCTURE: Ensure that the telecommunications infrastructure in Lincoln County has broadband capacity and network reliability comparable to that of Portland.

10.1.a: Inventory the telecomm infrastructure in all aspects, including the status of sites and back-up power.

10.1.b: Work with the public safety community to obtain county-wide inter-operable public safety communications networks for both voice and broadband data. Use all media platforms to provide emergency alerts: for example, notify commercial radio.

10.1.c: Work with cellular telephone carriers, local communities, and planning commissions to find acceptable cell tower sites emphasizing co-location. Develop credible business cases to expand cellular telephone services countywide by filling in the current “holes” in cell phone coverage. Improve application process(es).

10.1.d: Work with local governments and mobile broadband data service providers to create public-private partnerships that result in mobile broadband service throughout the county.

Strategy 10.2 READINESS: Work with education providers to improve the readiness of the Lincoln County work force for jobs requiring information technology skills. Analysis of jobs may be needed for current needs and future trends.

Strategy 10.3 AFFORDABILITY: Study the affordability of bandwidth, the aggregating of demand and funding sources to assist rural areas.

Strategy 10.4 GOVERNMENT’S ROLE: Work with county and local governments to improve their capabilities to make local government services accessible through the Internet. An example is basic GIS; it needs to be available as public information to the highest degree possible. Incentives for location/expansion, e-commerce zone, technical assistance, and business or tech park development are also roles for government.

Strategy 10.5 BUILD LOCAL CAPACITY: The Lincoln County Technology Solutions Alliance and the Lincoln County Telecom Committee are concerned with the business sector and infrastructure, respectively. OCZMA’s “Branding the Coast for Lifestyle Entrepreneurs” is another effort that is underway. The Angel Investor Network that hosts the “Willamette Angel Conference” is a way to connect investors with early stage technology companies. We anticipate more opportunities to arise in light of the Hatfield Marine Science Center and its activities in wave energy, ocean observation and marine mammals. Fish Tracking technology is an example of this.